

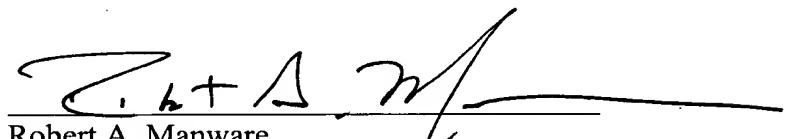
REMARKS

In response to a Notice of Allowance mailed October 21, 2003, Applicant has chosen to file a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.114, along with the present Preliminary Amendment. At the time that the Notice of Allowance was mailed, claim 9 was the only claim pending. The Examiner allowed claim 9. Rather than pay the issue fee, applicants have chosen to add new claims 10-27 in the present Preliminary Amendment for filing in conjunction with the RCE. Applicant respectfully submits that no new subject matter is added by the present amendment. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the Amendments and Remarks set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of new claims 10-27. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: January 21, 2004

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